



Fogarty Elementary School holds its first Trunk or Treat.

CONNECTIONS

OCTOBER 28, 2022

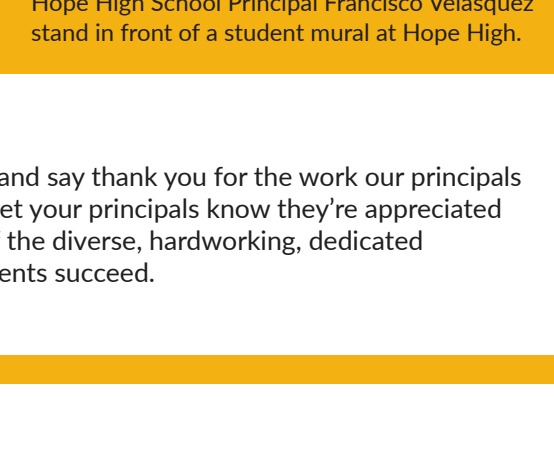
SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER

Welcome to the latest edition of the Providence Public School District (PPSD) bi-weekly newsletter! If you or someone you know misses any of our newsletters, you can find past editions on the [District's website](#) in multiple languages.

October is **National Principals Month**, a time to recognize the key role that principals play in making a school a great place to work and learn. Here in Providence, we're fortunate to have many great educators leading our buildings. That includes the 2022 Rhode Island **Principal of the Year** AND the 2022 Rhode Island **Assistant Principal of the Year!**

I was fortunate to serve as both an assistant principal and principal here in Providence for many years. I remember the challenges and the joys of the job very well. And the added stress of the pandemic has only made the job more demanding these past few years. That's why I want to make sure we're doing everything we can as a District to support our school leaders. We've launched several new resources and training programs for principals to help them manage their buildings and grow as leaders.

But it's also important for all of us to stop every now and then to show our support and say thank you for the work our principals are putting in for our students and staff, day in, and day out. So please take time to let your principals know they're appreciated with a few kind words or a note. It can really mean a lot. I couldn't be more proud of the diverse, hardworking, dedicated principals of Providence Public Schools. Thank you for all you do in helping our students succeed.



Superintendent Javier Montañez Ed. D., left, and Hope High School Principal Francisco Velasquez stand in front of a student mural at Hope High.

DISTRICT UPDATES

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY AWARENESS WEEK

From November 7 through 11, schools across the country will celebrate **National School Psychology Awareness Week**. School Psychologists in Providence Public Schools support our students' ability to learn and teachers' ability to teach. School psychologists provide academic, behavioral, and mental health supports. They also provide evaluation, assessment, data analysis, consultation with teachers and families, crisis prevention and response, and support to diverse learners while promoting student achievement and well-being. So make sure to take time to thank a school psychologist for all they do!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Early November brings several important dates to remember. First, **daylight saving time ends on Sunday, November 6**, so remember to "fall back" an hour and get that extra sleep! Also, there is no school on **Election Day, November 8**, and no school on **Veterans Day, November 11**, in honor of those who have served in the U.S. armed forces.

FREE FLU CLINIC

The final in a series of free flu shot clinics at Providence Public Schools will be held at **Nathanael Greene Middle School** at 721 Chalkstone Avenue on **Wednesday, November 2**, from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Please note that online registration at schoolflu.com is required to guarantee an appointment. Walk-ins will be allowed based on available resources.

PRE-K FAMILIES MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR FREE LAPTOP

Providence Public Schools **Pre-Kindergarten** families may be eligible to receive a free laptop computer! Rhode Island PBS Education Services is partnering with Waterford Upstart to provide qualifying families with a free laptop and WiFi to access a range of high-quality early childhood instructional resources. Plus, families get to keep the laptop computer at the end of the 1-year program. Families of Pre-K students can register at www.waterford.org/upstart to find out if you're eligible.



PROVIDENCE PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRE-K FAMILIES:
SEE IF YOU'RE ELIGIBLE FOR A FREE LAPTOP!

RHODE ISLAND PBS EDUCATION SERVICES IS PARTNERING WITH WATERFORD UPSTART TO PROVIDE QUALIFYING FAMILIES WITH A FREE LAPTOP COMPUTER AND WIFI TO ACCESS A RANGE OF HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES. PLUS, FAMILIES GET TO KEEP THE LAPTOP COMPUTER AT THE END OF THE 1-YEAR PROGRAM.

FAMILIES OF PRE-K STUDENTS CAN REGISTER AT WWW.WATERFORD.ORG/UPSTART TO FIND OUT IF YOU'RE ELIGIBLE.

EQUITY IN PROVIDENCE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OUR EQUITY AND BELONGING TEAM IS GROWING!

The Providence Public School District is excited and proud to welcome the following new staff members to continue providing resources and support matched to student needs, for every student in every school:

- **Aarav Sundaresh:** Director of Equity & Belonging
- **Carian Diaz:** Title IX & EEO Officer
- **Denezia Fahie:** Equity and Belonging Support Specialist

You can learn more about our new team members and their role in supporting our students by clicking here to read the latest [Equity and Belonging Bulletin](#).

BLACK MEN IN WHITE COATS YOUTH SUMMIT

This event will be held on October 29, 2022 at the Warren Alpert Medical School at Brown University. More information can be found here. [More information can be found here.](#)



RESPECT STUDENT EQUITY LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

The **Raising Expectations for Student Perspectives, Experiences, Consciousness, and Traditions (RESPECT) Conference** will take place at the Marriott Hotel located on Orms St. in Providence, from 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., on November 16. The Keynote and Facilitator of this session for 60 middle and high school student leaders will be **Mr. William Winfield**, one of the most sought-after professional speakers for inspiring and activating students and educators in America.

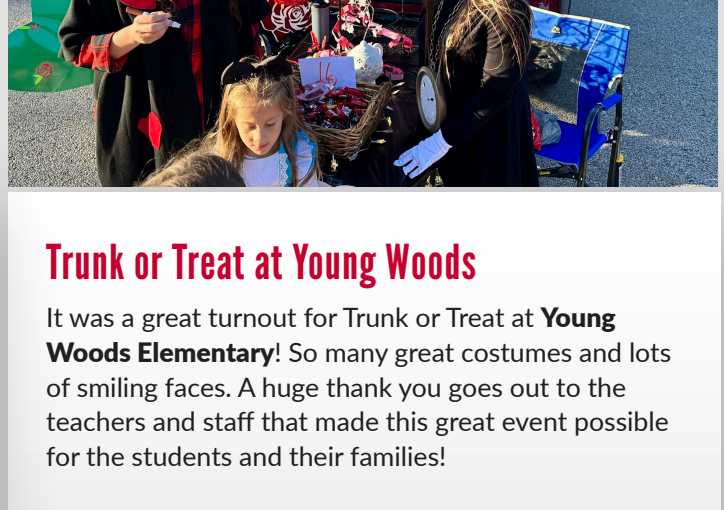
CELEBRATING STUDENTS

Our hardworking, talented students are doing amazing things every day. Here are just a few examples.



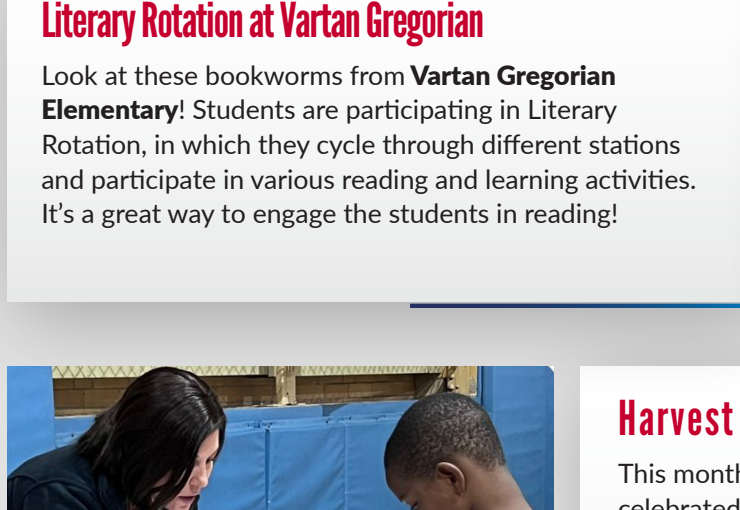
Pleasant View Costume Party

Earlier this month, students and staff at **Pleasant View Elementary** showed their Halloween spirit in style at the school's annual costume party! If you've ever seen a lion cuter than this, please let us know. The costume party is a great way to build community connections with the school and show students and parents that Pleasant View's staff and administrators will always go above and beyond for their kids!



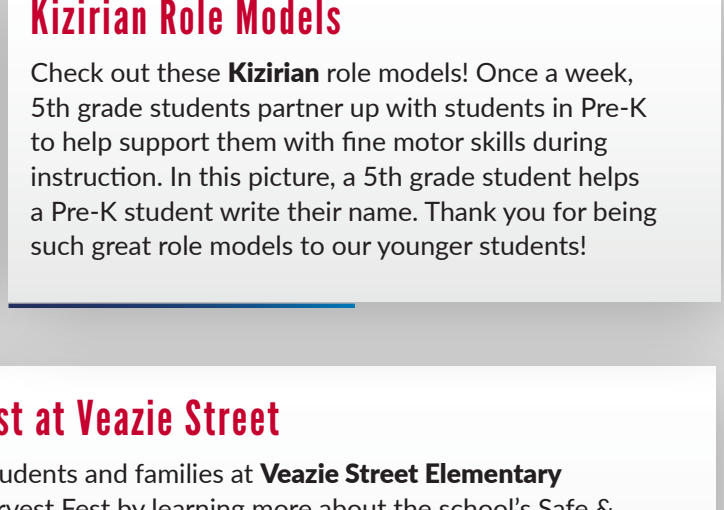
Trunk or Treat at Young Woods

It was a great turnout for Trunk or Treat at **Young Woods Elementary**! So many great costumes and lots of smiling faces. A huge thank you goes out to the teachers and staff that made this great event possible for the students and their families!



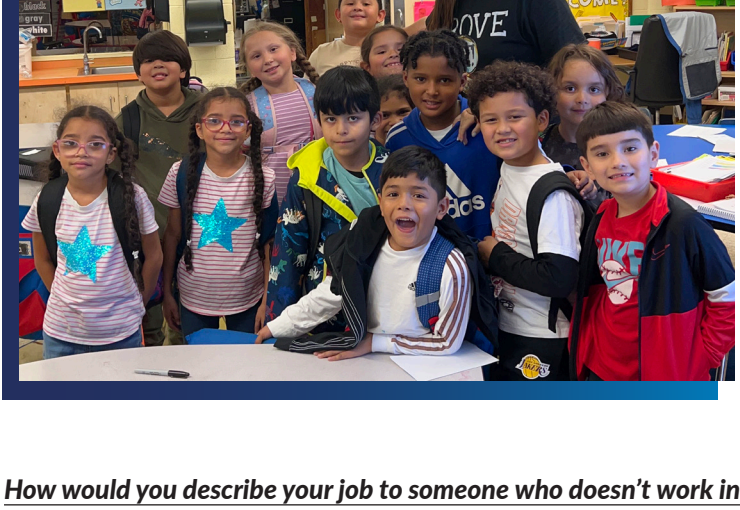
Literary Rotation at Vartan Gregorian

Look at these bookworms from **Vartan Gregorian Elementary**! Students are participating in Literary Rotation, in which they cycle through different stations and participate in various reading and learning activities. It's a great way to engage the students in reading!



Kizirian Role Models

Check out these **Kizirian** role models! Once a week, 5th grade students partner up with students in Pre-K to help support them with fine motor skills during instruction. In this picture, a 5th grade student helps a Pre-K student write their name. Thank you for being such great role models to our younger students!



Harvest Fest at Veazie Street

This month, students and families at **Veazie Street Elementary** celebrated Harvest Fest by learning more about the school's Safe & Caring Program. The program promotes positive relationship building skills, provides structure and routines, sets clear expectations, and celebrates good decision making. Students gained a better understanding of social-emotional learning and were able to engage in activities like Making an Anger Catcher (to support anger management), Feelings Bingo and I Spy Emotions (to identify emotions) and Calming Corner Activities (strategies for students to self-regulate). Lastly, students that attended signed an anti-bullying pledge during the program.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Get to know the amazing people who work with our students every day!

Heather Simons

Second Grade ELL Integrated Teacher

Located in: Pleasant View Elementary School

Joined PPSD in: 2000

How would you describe your job to someone who doesn't work in education?

Second grade is a pivotal year. Students are finishing learning to read, and they're transitioning into reading to learn. So I'm looking to build strong readers and writers among 23 very unique individuals who may or may not know English, as well as students who may or may not have a learning disability. There are lots of social-emotional needs too, so we build those supports and language supports as well. All of that while you're juggling several other things and putting fires out at the same time!

How important is integrated learning for your students?

Oh it's vital for my students as well as our younger ones. You have to remember, some of our students were still doing distance learning not long ago. So some things about being in school are still new. One of the best things about being an integrated ESL teacher at this level is that all students, regardless of their home language, are still learning how to speak, read, and write in English. They are all building their English vocabulary and developing content knowledge. The students have so much to learn from each other. Developing their listening skills and supporting discourse around content helps build the culture of our little learning community.

At Pleasant View, we're in clusters from kindergarten to second grade, so our second graders are the role models. You show them how to line up, give their best effort, and how to make mistakes. Mistakes are proof that we are trying. I always tell my students it's okay to say, "I don't know yet," we didn't all

"Our school pledge is 'Pride, perseverance, respect, integrity, determination, excellence.' That carries students for years going forward -- that's the goal."

learn to walk at the same time. Our school pledge is "Pride, perseverance, respect, integrity, determination, excellence." That carries students for years going forward -- that's the goal. We even have students lead the pledge in the morning, to set that tone for younger kids.

What do you wish more people knew about being a teacher?

I think people have an idea that it's a hard job, but sometimes I do wish they could walk a mile in our shoes. And don't get me wrong, there are lots of happy moments. But there are tough times too. We see kids who have been through a lot in their

lives outside of school. You have to check your own baggage at the door when you come in, and you have to understand that students may not always be in ready to learn every day. And you're absolutely not done when they walk out the door. There's a lot that goes into it, whether it's here at the school or at home.

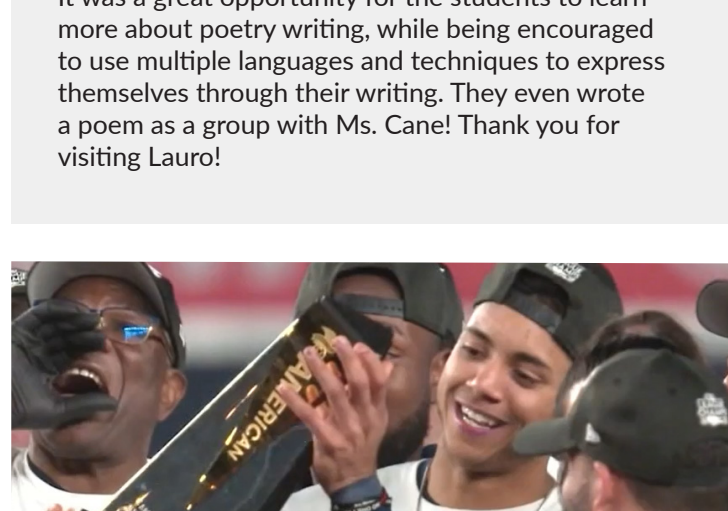
What are you most looking forward to this school year?

Seeing great growth in reading. I think we have some great instruction happening, and it will address some of those gaps schools everywhere are seeing from COVID. We're keeping our fingers crossed that reading will grow in leaps and bounds. The other thing I love is seeing how much students grow in one year. Even after the year is over, your kids leave - but they never really leave. One of my former students had a hard time with social-emotional issues and she'd shut down because she had trouble self-regulating. She grew so much over the course of the year, and now I hear how she's so mature, she's handling her emotions better, and she's thriving. Those things make all the stress worth it!

IT'S GOOD NEWS: PPSD IN THE PRESS

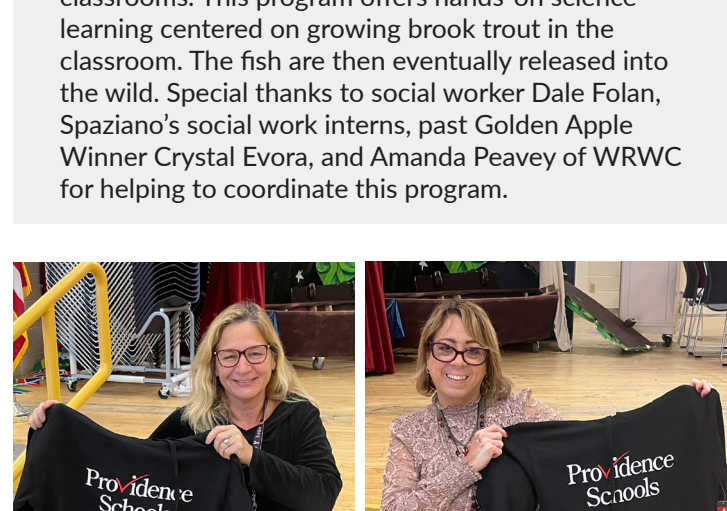
- [Hometown Hero: Jordan Duke, Classical](#) WPRI, October 24, 2022
- [Classical alum Jeremy Peña wins ALCS MVP, Astros advance to ALCS](#) ABC6, October 24, 2022
- [How Providence educators are getting kids back in school](#) Providence Journal, October 21, 2022
- [Matos hosts Hispanic Heritage Month ceremony honoring local heroes](#) ABC6, October 15, 2022
- [Providence Students Meet Poet Laureate](#) ABC6, October 13, 2022

AROUND THE DISTRICT



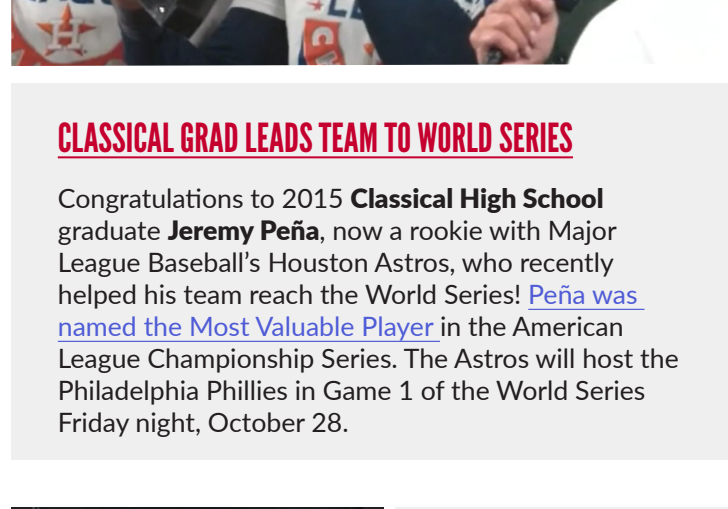
POET LAUREATE AT LAURO

This month, Rhode Island Poet Laureate **Tina Cane** came to **Carl G. Lauro Elementary School** to read and write poetry with fourth and fifth grade students. It was a great opportunity for the students to learn more about poetry writing, while being encouraged to use multiple languages and techniques to express themselves through their writing. They even wrote a poem as a group with Ms. Cane! Thank you for visiting Lauro!



FISH FRIENDS AT SPAZIANO

The **Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council** (WRWC) has partnered with 4th grade classrooms at **Spaziano Elementary** to bring fish into the classrooms. This program offers hands-on science learning centered on growing brook trout in the classroom. The fish are then eventually released into the wild. Special thanks to social worker Dale Folan, Spaziano's social work interns, past Golden Apple Winner Crystal Evora, and Amanda Peavey of WRWC for helping to coordinate this program.



CLASSICAL GRAD LEADS TEAM TO WORLD SERIES

Congratulations to 2015 **Classical High School** graduate **Jeremy Peña**, now a rookie with Major League Baseball's Houston Astros, who recently helped his team reach the World Series! **Peña was named the Most Valuable Player** in the American League Championship Series. The Astros will host the Philadelphia Phillies in Game 1 of the World Series Friday night, October 28.



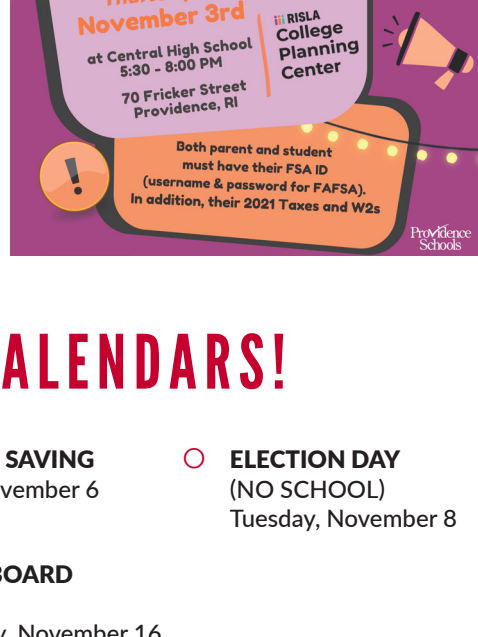
DELSESTO TEACHERS OF THE MONTH

Congratulations to 6th grade math teacher **Michele Pistraccolo** and staff member **Marisol Lebron** for being awarded Teacher of the Month and Staff Member of the Month, respectively, at **DelSesto Middle School**. They both go the extra mile every day to help make DelSesto a better and more welcoming place for students and colleagues. We appreciate all that you do!



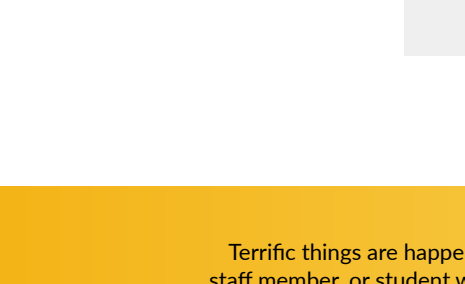
AWARD-WINNING NURSES

Providence Public Schools nursing, along with a Classical High School graduate, have been honored by Rhode Island Lieutenant Governor Sabina Matos with Community Hero Awards for their contributions in helping aid the Hispanic community during the COVID-19 pandemic. **Donna O'Connor**, a nurse at PPSD since 1994, has been instrumental in her work in the District, and she exemplified that further when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. **Dr. Eugenio Hernandez**, a graduate of Classical High School, was also instrumental during the COVID-19 pandemic, and helped provide vaccines for people in the community through his pharmacy. Thank you to them, and to all the PPSD nurses for their hard work and contributions to the District.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- **URI CAMPUS EVENT DAY**
Friday, November 4
- **DAYLIGHT SAVING**
Sunday, November 6
- **ELECTION DAY (NO SCHOOL)**
Tuesday, November 8
- **VETERANS DAY (NO SCHOOL)**
Friday, November 11
- **SCHOOL BOARD MEETING**
Wednesday, November 16



SODEXO'S RI LOCAL DAY - November 9
This month's **RI Local Day** is November 9! Featuring fresh RI and regional items including breakfast bar, apples, fish, pizza dough, chicken salad, potatoes, and veggies!
Mark your calendars for a **Parent University presentation, School Meals and Student Engagement with Sodexo**, on **Thursday, November 1** from 6-7:30! Learn about FREE school meals and student engagement through the Sodexo Providence Child Nutrition Program. Click [this link](#) to join our **PPSD Parent Food Working Group** today to join quarterly meetings and give feedback on school meals!

Terrific things are happening across the District, and we want to get the word out! If you have a program, event, staff member, or student with an amazing story that you'd like to highlight, please email communications@ppsd.org.